

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

Corrected Figures 3-18 (sixteen pages) are filed herewith and are each labeled “Replacement Sheet” in the top left margin. Please replace “defective” Figures 3-18 with corrected Figures 3-18, which are supplied herewith.

REMARKS

The pending Notice acknowledges that the application is allowed and is being prepared for issuance.

The application is alleged in the Notice to contain defective drawings. Specifically, the lines, numbers and letters of Figures 3-18, as filed on May 6, 2002, are considered to be poorly drawn and therefore not amenable for reproduction purposes. Filed herewith in response to this allegation are replacement sheets for these figures whereby the lines and especially the letters/numbers are depicted more clearly. Apparently, a reprographic error led to fading of the lower portion of the letters/numbers in the previously filed figures. Applicant further submits that these replacement figures do not introduce new matter to the application.

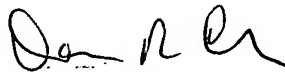
Marked-up, annotated copies of the drawings corresponding to the replaced figures are not submitted with this filing. Applicant kindly indicates that, according to MPEP § 608.02(v), such annotated copies are only required when amendments of a substantive nature are made.

The instant application was allowed on November 13, 2006, and the Issue Fee was remitted to the Patent Office on January 22, 2007. However, Applicant respectfully submits that an amendment under 37 CFR § 1.312 is not necessary for responding to the pending Notice, since the current amendments are made solely to cure alleged informalities in the application.

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It is believed that no fee is due in connection with this document; however, should any fees under 37 CFR §§ 1.16 to 1.21 be required for any reason, the Commissioner is authorized to deduct said fees from Deposit Account No. 08-3038/11899.0231.NPUS00.

Respectfully submitted,



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